
Rendering Nature - Ephemera

Rick Shaefer: Rendering Nature

2014

Rick Shaefer: Rendering Nature Vinyl Wall Panel Crows

Bellarmino Museum of Art

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C R O W S



I started drawing crows as a kind of light relief between working on larger pieces—an interlude to break up the sometimes-arduous process of drawing life-size trees and large animals. My current medium for the drawings is charcoal and they are a perfect foil for that. Crows are extremely fun to draw because they have immense attitude. They gather for conclaves and engage in huge squawking arguments and discussions that can go on for hours. My previous studio was in the woods and nearly every afternoon at 3 o'clock the silence would suddenly be broken by a mad crescendo of their afternoon get together. They didn't seem to care if I occasionally stepped out and joined in.

The fun part for me is that they display such a variety of emotion that drawing a series of them along a barbed wire fence seemed limitless. They take on the impression of a bar of musical notes. You can draw them for a long time without repeating yourself. To be completely honest, in these drawings, I have freely mixed crows with their slightly larger cousin the raven because they are both wonderful subjects, look similar, and I didn't want to go back and forth with the size issue. You can perhaps pick out the ravens by their sturdier beaks. And like the crow and the raven, I scavenge for source material to draw from wherever I can find it. It's funny, now that I am drawing them, they seem to have suddenly disappeared. Whereas I used to frequently slow the car down to avoid hitting one in the street, I rarely see them now—probably part of their diabolical mischievousness.

Footnote: I moved the Crows into another room down the hall from my studio because they were too disruptive for me to concentrate on my other artwork.

-Rick Shaefer
2014

